

USAWC STRATEGY RESEARCH PROJECT

STATE PARTNERSHIP PROGRAM BETWEEN THE REPUBLIC OF ESTONIA AND THE STATE OF  
MARYLAND

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## ABSTRACT

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Since re-establishing its sovereignty in 1991 Estonia has expressed its intentions to strive for membership to the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO). Each year, aspiring countries are expected to achieve certain goals in the political and economic fields. Ensuring that they are able to meet these responsibilities candidates must submit an updated annual report on its progress. This report is called the Membership Action Plan (MAP). In November 2002 NATO met in Prague to decide on the second round of enlargement and which aspirants will be invited to join. Estonia was one of six candidates that received an invite. The Maryland National Guard State Partnership Program (SPP) was a key contributor to the significant democratic and political progress made by Estonia. The SPP is designed to prepare non-NATO countries for NATO membership by placing special emphasis on Military Support to Civil Authority (MSCA). The object of this paper is to examine the current SPP between the State of Maryland and the Republic of Estonia.



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## **STATE PARTNERSHIP PROGRAM BETWEEN THE REPUBLIC OF ESTONIA AND THE STATE OF MARYLAND**

Since the end of the Cold War, the United States has continued to be the lead country in the world promoting peace. The National Guard international efforts actively support the National Security Strategy of the United States. The United States has continued to be globally engaged in shaping the international environment. Peacetime military engagement encompasses all military activities involving other nations intended to shape the security environment in peacetime.<sup>1</sup>

The purpose of this paper is to study the State Partnership Program (SPP) between the state of Maryland and the Republic of Estonia. The paper will explore why the Maryland National Guard's relationship with its State Partner, Estonia, has been considered to be one of the most successful SPP programs by the National Guard Bureau (NGB). The recent history of Estonia since the early nineties reveals the extent Estonia needed assistance from the United States and the Maryland National Guard for its candidacy to the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO).

The paper investigates the beginning of the SPP from an historical perspective. The main objective is to explore how the Maryland National Guard SPP assisted Estonia in meeting the Membership Action Plan (MAP) requirements, which is designed to assist in NATO membership. The paper will review the structure of the SPP program and the Maryland National Guard initiatives for Estonia's preparation into NATO membership. In 1993, the National Guard Bureau became the lead agency among the Reserve Component forces for the State Partnership Program, an innovative initiative that grew out the US European Command's focus on the newly emerging independent states of Central and Eastern Europe. With the motto, "Bridge to America", the State Partnership Program established a formal partnership between "Host Nations" and selected U.S. National Guard units.<sup>2</sup> Through military-to-military contact, the Maryland SPP promotes the values of military subordination to civilian authority, the development of democratic institutions, an open market economy, and human rights.

### **THE ESTABLISHMENT OF THE STATE PARTNERSHIP PROGRAM**

The origins of the State Partnership Program (SPP) are traced to 1992 when the President of Lithuania asked NATO to help convert a portion of his military forces to a reserve force similar to the United States National Guard. SPP is functionally similar to NATO's Partnership for Peace (PfP), and complements U.S. National Security Strategy and U.S. National Military Strategy. The strategic value of the SPP has great importance not only to the



U.S. but also to Europe and the whole world. The US national security objectives in the Baltic States were to strengthen regional cooperation, enhance regional security and stability, and promote growth in trade and investment institutions.<sup>3</sup> The SPP provided an overseas presence in these emerging democracies through Military Liaison Teams (MLT) from the (U.S. European Command). The first MLTs for Latvia and Lithuania served as bilateral military-to-military contacts. The program's goals reflected an evolving international affairs mission for the National Guard, to promote regional stability and civil-military relationships in support of U.S. objectives. The State Partners actively participate in a host of engagement activities, fellowship-style internships, and civic leader visits.<sup>4</sup> The Lithuanian government was particularly interested in the National Guard's Military Support to Civil Authorities (MSCA) function during emergencies and disasters. In response, the Office of the Secretary of Defense (OSD) tasked the National Guard Bureau (NGB) to help with the project. The U.S. National Guard was an appropriate model because it normally responds to more than 400 state and federal emergencies in 54 states and territories annually.<sup>5</sup>

The U.S. state partnerships that formed with the Baltic States were based on similar demographics with their Baltic country counterparts, such as geography, climate and economy. Adjutant Generals from the different states played a key and leading role in the development of partnerships, which was often a difficult process. The National Guard's concept of a citizen-soldier military force, functioning in peacetime, yet maintaining military readiness under the immediate control of the state governor is very much the focal point of the State Partnership Program. The SPP ability to focus the attention of a small area of the Department of Defense (DOD) linking a National Guard State with a single country in support of US Government policies is a valuable part of engagement activities in the Baltic region.

The goals of the civil military relations include:

1. Democratization – subordination of the military to civilian authority and inculcation of the concept of political non alignment (civilian control and apolitical)
2. Peacetime Use – exporting the ideal that a militia or national guard system is less expensive to maintain than a full-time regular force
3. Demilitarization – promotion of the militia system by maintaining military readiness that poses no immediate threat to neighboring nations and helping nations transition former soldiers into the civilian economy

#### 4. Confidence and Security Building Measures

The formal process for candidacy in the SPP is as follows:

- The Potential Partner Nation submits the SPP request to the U.S. Embassy
- The U.S. Ambassador approves and forwards request to the European Combatant Commander
- The European Combatant Commander recommends approval and submits the request through the Joint Staff to the Interagency Working Group (IWG) of the Department of State
- THE IWG approves and forwards the request to the Chief of the National Guard Bureau (NGB) for concurrence and recommended assignment of a U.S. Partnership state
- The NGB reviews the application of an interested State and recommends a partnership state.
- The Chief of NGB approves the match and returns approved partnership through the IWG, Joint Staff, and the Combatant Commander to U.S. Ambassador;
- The SPP activities are initiated.<sup>6</sup>

The SPP underscores and promotes the goals of civil –military relations:

#### **THE NATIONAL GUARD STATE PARTNERSHIP PROGRAM FROM A HISTORICAL PERSPECTIVE**

As the Partnership for Peace program (PfP) mainly focused on military-to-military relations, the SPP used both military and citizen expertise. To understand the SPP, a review of the US post-World War II nation building efforts is necessary. At the end of the Cold War, the U.S. was concerned with the path that the former Soviet Union States would take after succession. The Baltic States were at a greater disadvantage in comparison with the Eastern

Europe countries. The economic, social, political, and military devastation was similar to post World War Europe. In response, between 1947-1952, the US created the European Recovery Program (ERP), better known as the Marshall Plan, injecting \$13.3 billion dollars into the European economy.<sup>7</sup> George C. Marshall set forth the policy of preventive defense in his 1947 commencement speech at Harvard University.<sup>8</sup> The Marshall Plan became a success story with a legacy that has lasted 50 years. It signaled that the US policy of isolationism was over. In addition, it provided the badly needed funds that permitted Europe to recover economically and fostered democracy and free markets. The Marshall Plan also created a sense of gratitude and a reservoir of good feelings between the US and the Europeans. Coupled with NATO, the Marshall Plan demonstrated the U.S. commitment to Europe's future. The result was an enhancement of European wealth and a promotion of relations among neighbors.<sup>9</sup> It has been quite evident that over the last fifty-seven years the ERP has been successful. In the same spirit of the ERP, the National Guard SPP provided the support needed by the Baltic States to become a solid democracy. As a result of its experiences, the National Guard is an organization that has a very sound understanding of civil and military missions. The National Guard dual mission of federal and state missions made it the ideal choice for the SPP, serving as a valuable model of capability and cost-effectiveness.

In 1997, the Chief of the National Guard Bureau, Lieutenant General Edward D. Baca, provided the vision for the National Guard SPP: "Build genuine state partnerships which mobilize the entire social fabric of American support to democracy abroad."

Capitalizing on the unique role of the National Guard, citizen-soldiers did and will continue to engage at home and abroad to promote stability by strengthening democracy and free market economies. Guard members assisted in the construction of democratic institutions and the social infrastructure necessary to sustain a democratic tradition. Partnership created long-term personal relationships based on openness, confidence, and trust.<sup>10</sup> The Guard's citizen-soldier model underscored the role of the military in a democratic society.<sup>11</sup> The SPP provided a "Bridge to America," promoting exchanges in both directions. For aspirant countries preparing for NATO membership, they had to meet the demanding requirements set forth in the Membership Action Plan.

## **REVIEW OF NATO'S MEMBERSHIP ACTION PLAN**

NATO created the Membership Action Plan (MAP) in April 1999 to help countries applying for NATO membership. NATO enlargement and the MAP enhance security and stability beyond expectations. In November 2002, Estonia was among seven countries that received invitations

to join NATO. Enlargement with its intrinsic transparency replaces the antiquated balance of power system that had destabilized Europe for centuries. The MAP enhances the NATO invitation process by providing a roadmap for aspiring countries.<sup>12</sup> The prerequisites consist of political and economic issues, defense and military issues, resource aspects, issues related to security, and legal aspects.

The MAP serves to provide feedback and advice from NATO to aspiring countries on their progress towards membership. The mechanics of NATO enlargement reflect a measured and progressive process for candidate membership. NATO recognizes that few states can meet its prerequisites on their own, so the Alliance prescribes gradual reforms and participation in various, though not sequential or hierarchical, organizations and programs—Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE), Partner for Peace (PFP), Euro-Atlantic Partnership Council (EAPC), and the MAP. Through these organizations, candidates can receive guidance and gain experiences that assist them with reforms and their military capabilities.<sup>13</sup> Participation in NATO-led peacekeeping operations provides the opportunity to operate with other NATO countries and enhance interoperability.

The MAP is the final and in many respects the most important step towards membership. Its function is to help candidates “with advice, assistance, and practical support on all aspects of NATO membership.”<sup>14</sup> Candidates submit an annual report (National Annual Program) addressing progress on political, economic, defense, resources, security, and legal issues, and receive feedback as well as political and technical advice. The MAP also serves as a review board for defense and military issues between NATO and the candidates, as well as an introduction to NATO defense planning.<sup>15</sup>

In making its selection, NATO assesses the suitability of the MAP countries regarding their potential to contribute to the Alliance, specifically, and the stability and security of Europe, generally. There are seven areas identified for assessment:

1. GDP growth
2. Per capita GDP;
3. Attainment of market economy
4. Defense expenditure
5. Defense expenditures per troop
6. Attainment of democratic political institutions
7. Strategic Rationale—strategic position and the armed forces.<sup>16</sup>

The MAP assists candidates in the quest for membership. NATO makes it clear that no roadmap to NATO membership exists, and that attaining all the prerequisites is no guarantee of membership. For NATO to even consider a country for membership, specific political and military prerequisites are required:

1. Peaceful resolution of ethnic, external territorial, internal jurisdictional, and international disputes. Refrain from using threats or force in international relations that are inconsistent with the purposes of the U.N.
2. Institution of democratic and civilian control of the armed forces.
3. Commitment to the PfP Framework Document and active participation in PfP.
4. Establishment of free market economies and democratic political system based on the rule of law.
5. Initiation of steps that allow the armed forces to operate seamlessly within the integrated military structure with the emphasis on collective defense and interoperability.<sup>17</sup>

## **BRIEF LOOK AT THE HISTORY OF ESTONIA**

Estonia is the smallest of the three Baltic States with a population of approximately 1.5 million people and is slightly geographically larger than Vermont and New Hampshire combined. It borders the Baltic Sea and the Gulf of Finland, and is situated between Latvia and Russia. The population is 65% Estonian, approximately 28% Russian, Byelorussian 1.5%, Finn 1%, and other 1.8%. The religion is predominantly Lutheran. <sup>18</sup>Tallinn is the capital of Estonia and has a population of over a half a million. The second largest city is Tartu located southeast of the capital and is home of one of the oldest universities in the western world. Estonia has a parliamentary democracy, and is broken into 15 counties.<sup>19</sup>

In August 1991, after a four-year struggle for sovereignty from the Soviet Union Estonia regained its independence. In the wake of independence, Estonia moved quickly to become an active player in the international community. In September, it was admitted to the United Nations (UN). In the UN, Estonia found common ground with other East European countries and participated in the UN's various committees and auxiliary bodies, such as the United Nations Educational, Scientific, and Cultural Organization (UNESCO), the United Nations

Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD), the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA), and the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP). In March 1992, Estonia took part in the creation of the Council of Baltic Sea States, an association of all the countries bordering the Baltic Sea and dedicated to furthering regional economic and political cooperation. In late 1991 Estonia actively sought support for its efforts to become a member of NATO. Cooperation with the European Union included significant economic aid as well as talks on a free-trade agreement.<sup>20</sup>

Estonia's greatest foreign policy success came in May 1993 with its admission to the Council of Europe. Estonia considered admission the equivalent of a clean bill of health as a young democracy, which Russia had sought to tarnish with accusations of human rights violations. These accusations were based on Estonia's policy for denying automatic citizenship to Russian immigrants. Despite early anxieties, Estonia eventually passed laws allowing for naturalization conditionally and in phases. The Russian government linked the further withdrawal of troops from Estonia to a satisfactory change in Estonia's citizenship stance. The issue in Estonia was more complex because ethnic Estonians represented only about two-thirds of the population in the early 1990s, and ethnic Russians constituted slightly more than 28 percent of the total. Historically, the issue of ethnic minorities historically has been manipulated for aggressive and opportunistic purposes, and NATO members were wary of possibly inheriting a ready-made crisis by admitting a state with substantial ethnic friction. In Estonia, Russians live in primarily ethnic towns and cities near the Russian border. The worst case scenario envisioned Russia inciting irredentism and moving into the Russian areas in the Baltic countries on request from a regional governing body.<sup>21</sup>

Estonia's primary goal was ensuring protection against an external threat. Estonia focused on military readiness in the mid-1990s with substantial help from its SPP partner-Maryland. The most dramatic step the country took was the appointment in May 1993 of Aleksander Einseln, a retired United States Army colonel and emigre Estonian, to command Estonia's fledgling armed forces. The decision drew strong objections from the U.S. State Department because some feared a negative Russian reaction to a former US military officer serving in such a high post in a former Soviet Union state. Finally, the US threatened to revoke Einseln's military pension and even his citizenship. Support for the new Estonian General from several U.S. senators, however, finally helped resolve the controversy. This was the only way at the time to avoid confrontation with the Soviets.

The armed forces in 1994 numbered about 3,000, including a 2,500-member army and a 500-member navy. There was also a 6,000-member reserve militia, known as the Defense

League (Kaitseliit); a 2,000-member paramilitary border guard under the command of the Ministry of Interior, and a maritime border guard, which also functioned as a coast guard. The army's equipment included eight Mi-8 transport helicopters. The navy possessed two former Soviet and four former Swedish patrol craft, as well as two small transport vessels. The government allocated some 250 million for defense in 1999, less than 1% of its GDP.

The armed forces offered tremendous challenges for Einseln. Serious divisions existed among several commanding officers, including the army chief of staff, who had received their training in the Soviet military and younger officers and recruits who distrusted leaders who had served in the "Soviet occupation army." The appointment of an outsider as commander was meant to close this rift, but the antipathies remained strong. Especially independent minded was the Defense League, a patriotic paramilitary group from the interwar years that was revived in early 1990. After independence the Defense League refused to merge with Estonia's budding army, preferring to remain a separate auxiliary force. Estonia was the first country in Baltic's to defy the Soviet Union by offering alternative service to Estonian residents scheduled to be drafted. After independence, Estonia instituted its own compulsory military, with a minimum term of one year beginning at age eighteen. Most of Estonia's draftees were university students. This was the start of Estonia's goal to build a military that could meet the MAP standard. Estonia's draft policy has been a success story for it's military because young Estonia's were willing to join the military to serve their country.

Estonia has increased its defense spending to 2% of the GDP in 2002 an increase from 1.8% in 2001. This increase to 2% is in compliance with NATO membership requirements. Its short-term defense objectives are to form a joint operations staff center, to install radar sites as part of NATO's Air Defense Systems and to review expenditure and allocation of resources.

<sup>22</sup>Estonia has showed its commitment to become a member of NATO and the international community.

#### **MARYLAND STATE PARTNERSHIP PROGRAM**

In 1993 Estonia was aligned with Maryland in the State Partnership Program. There were several reasons why Estonia was partnered with Maryland: Estonians were progressing well as a democracy; they desired Western direct capital investments, and they sought NATO. Estonia had already contributed to NATO Peacekeeping missions. Estonia also participated in the Baltic Sea Regional Security Cooperation Council, and many bi-lateral defense security agreements. There were a U.S. – Baltic Charter Security Cooperation and U.S. uniformed

service members were present in Estonia. Maryland has a large Estonia population in Baltimore another factor in the partnership selection process.

The Maryland Guard was instrumental in establishing links between the Maryland Higher Education System and the Estonian Ministry of Education. Of tremendous significance, the Lieutenant Governor of the State of Maryland and forty educators and economic developers visited Estonia in May 1999. This was the first visit to Estonia by a Lieutenant since the SPP has been in existence. During this visit, solid contacts were established and education exchanges are projected for FY-2003 using computer base web-sites and distance learning classrooms.

To assist Estonia in meeting the MAP, Maryland developed the following objectives to ensure that training was focused to meet specific needs and capabilities:

- Demonstrate military support to civilian authorities
- Develop security systems and procedures
- Assist the development of an open market economy
- Establish education exchange program

The training activities included emergency response, crisis action, personnel management, education and training, logistics, military law and security, civil affairs, communications interoperability, military medicine, public affairs, and counter-drug activities.

The Maryland National Guard put military support to civilian authorities at the top of its training. The Maryland Guard wanted to demonstrate the role the military should take in providing support to civilian authorities in both National Defense and domestic response missions. Consequently Maryland initiated the Minuteman Fellowship Program expanding civil areas of cooperation. The program was flexible and readily adapted to new initiatives and increased partnerships. The Maryland Guard selected experienced senior offices in education, economic development and preventive medicine to establish a relationship with their Estonian counterparts. This initiative has developed into formal concepts between civilian educators and politicians.

The second objective entailed the key area of security. Protection of classified information was a critical part of the MAP. Estonia would be expected upon accession to have in place sufficient safeguards and procedures to ensure the security of the most sensitive information as laid down in NATO security policy.

The third objective of the Maryland SPP program was to foster an open market economy. Lacking a tradition of open markets, access to the U.S. market was an obstacle. The Maryland



Guard assisted in the development of partnerships between local businesses in Maryland and Estonia. Maryland viewed this objective as a gesture of goodwill to develop a deeper friendship between respective cities.

The final objective for Maryland's SPP was to establish an education exchange program between Maryland colleges and universities and Estonia universities. Visiting professors from Estonia would be incorporated in Maryland University later based on the success of the program.

#### DEMONSTRATING MILITARY SUPPORT TO CIVILIAN AUTHORITIES

Visits to the Maryland Emergency Management Agency were paramount to the Estonians' understanding of how the military provides support during hurricanes, snowstorms and other types of civil crisis contingency operations. This forum added to the Estonian's overall understanding of the relationship between the US National Guard and civil authorities. Estonian Minuteman Fellows remained in the U.S. for up to two months in duration to observe civil-military operations in action. Estonian officials attended workshops in Maryland to learn about the U.S. government system and how the U.S. military functions in a democracy. During 1998, the Maryland National Guard hosted eleven traveling contact teams and fourteen familiarization visits with Estonia. During 2000, these visits were increased to 300 visits between Maryland and Estonia. Estonia officials observed how the National Guard interfaces with civilian agencies that include the state and local police, border patrol, customs, and Maryland Emergency Management Agency. In 2003, Estonian delegations are scheduled to visit Maryland to attend classes in the areas of radio communication, environmental information and physical security. This training falls under the support to civilian authorities. Maryland and Estonia should expand its corporations between business organization and local Chambers of Commerce in order to market goods. In June 2002, ten Estonian ordnance soldiers joined the Maryland National Guard's 229<sup>th</sup> Main Support Battalion for Annual Training at Grafenwoehr, Germany. There are plans to increase military exchanges through the Minuteman Fellowship program to provide training to a greater number of Estonian soldiers. The SPP has been an effective advocate for democratic ideals and civilian control of the military. The Minuteman Fellowship Program total budget is \$1,000,000 with Maryland funding \$140,000 of the total budget. In fiscal year 1999, Maryland and Estonia Minuteman Fellows attended workshops together designed to show how governmental and non-governmental agencies in the U.S. interact in preparation for disasters. In 2000, nuclear response workshops were held in Baltimore Maryland. The purpose of these workshops was to provide training for first responders in the event of a nuclear accident.

The Maryland National Guard hosted events centered on leadership at the officer and non-commissioned officer level. This has evolved over the last few years to enable the Estonians a greater understanding of the US military leadership experience. Members of the 70<sup>th</sup> Training Regiment, who routinely train officer candidates and non-commissioned officers in military leadership, hosted numerous forums on the philosophy of U.S. leadership. The knowledge the Estonians gained through these exchanges has influenced the Estonian Ministry of Defense, and the General Staff is reviewing its leadership training programs. Additional training that the Maryland National Guard and Estonia conducted involved medical emergency response, law enforcement procedures, staff operations and chaplain's duties.<sup>23</sup>

Maryland has participated in several National Guard exercise (Guardex) programs with Estonia. Guardex is a comprehensive program established by the National Guard Bureau to enhance the SPP and provide additional assets to the Combatant Commander U.S. European Command. These initiatives were designed to enhance cooperation and demonstrate the importance of a citizen-based military volunteer army. Since the start of the program in 1995, Maryland has provided training in the areas of peacekeeping, peace support, search and rescue, and civil military emergency planning for humanitarian assistance under the auspices of the Guardex program. Estonia began sending small teams to Maryland for a variety of training events during the Maryland Guard two-week annual training cycle. Maryland training and support to Estonia in these areas have been an essential part of meeting MAP requirements.

## DEVELOPMENT OF SECURITY SYSTEMS AND PROCEDURES

The development of Estonia's state security system and the operational security safeguard procedures of its classified information is an on-going processes. In 1998, members of the Maryland National Guard provided training to Estonian military officers on how to safeguard classified information.<sup>24</sup> The Maryland Guard helped Estonia write the security regulations for its Military and Civilian Government. Areas that were covered in Estonian security regulations included electronic information security and document control procedures. The Maryland Guard made several visits in the subsequent years to ensure that the implementation and standardization of the security program met NATO standards. This training was key in the draft Security Institutions Act that Estonia was required to prepare by NATO. Estonia met NATO's security requirements and continues to refine its security procedures accordingly.

## ASSISTING IN THE DEVELOPMENT OF AN OPEN MARKET ECONOMY

One of the major problems associated with trade involves production capacity. Estonian enterprises are small and cannot produce quantities that would make the export profitable for both parties. Moreover, it was difficult to make direct contacts between entrepreneurs because there was no way for Estonia's entrepreneurs to market their products in the U.S.

In the framework of Maryland SPP and promotion of economic relationships, several visits by representatives of economic affairs have taken place. During a 1999 visit, the Lieutenant Governor of Maryland discussed economic development with the First Secretary of Economic Affairs. The Maryland National Guard has since conducted additional visits and also appointed a colonel responsible for economic cooperation.<sup>25</sup>

The SPP assisted the Estonia Embassy in organizing business meetings between entrepreneurs in Maryland and Estonian officials. One initiative involved an economic fair to promote direct contacts with businesses in Maryland. The Maryland Guard assisted in the development of the partnership between Garrett Community College in Maryland and The Estonian Business School. Garrett Community College provided business-counseling services at no charge to Estonia government. The value of SPP became readily apparent because the Maryland Guard helped Estonia establish some key partnerships that would not have otherwise resulted.

## ESTABLISHMENT OF EDUCATION EXCHANGE PROGRAM

The Maryland Guard was instrumental in establishing links between the Maryland Higher Education System and the Estonian Ministry of Education. To date the most significant event was the visit of forty Maryland educators to Estonia in May 1999. During this visit, contacts and education exchanges were established using computer based web sites and distance learning classrooms. This event was followed by the visits of several representatives of universities and cities of Maryland. In return, a delegation of Estonian mayors visited Maryland in September 2000. Later in the year Estonian and Maryland cities in a gesture of goodwill, agreed to develop a deeper friendship, fostering cooperation and understanding and exploring educational, economic and cultural opportunities:

- Tartu – Salisbury University
- Otepää – McHenry Maryland
- Torva – Grantsville “ ”
- Valga – Oakland “ ”

- Viljandi – Frostburg University
- Tapa – Cumberland Maryland
- Sillamae – Havre de Grace “ ”

Since the establishment of the educational exchange program, 200 Estonian students have attended universities in Maryland. Because of the success of the exchange program, Estonian military members also participated. Thus far, there are ten Estonian students with scholarships studying in Maryland and one visiting professor. Pleased with the success of the partnership program, educational institutions in Maryland have begun funding some of the travel for Estonian exchange students. Cooperative projects now being implemented include:

- Baltic Studies/American Studies (Joint Academic Programs)
- Introduction of the Community College Model to Estonia
- Faculty and Staff Development in Distance Education
- Virtual Student Exchange via Distance Learning
- A Masters in Public Administration Program offered to Estonians through the University of Baltimore
- English Language Training Institute
- A Join Science Education Project for Secondary Schools
- Aviation Studies: a partnership between the Estonian Aviation College and Frederick Community College in Maryland
- Assisting Estonia in Creating an Information Technology College

The Maryland's educational programs with Estonia are examples of the transition from a military program to a civilian-to-civilian contact program. The Maryland National Guard funded the initial meeting through Minuteman Fellows. In 2002, Maryland National Guard funded approximately fifty of Minuteman Fellows-related educational exchanges, with Maryland colleges and universities funding half of the exchanges.<sup>26</sup>

#### **LOOKING AHEAD AT THE MARYLAND NATIONAL GUARD SPP**

The Maryland SPP was instrumental in helping Estonia meet MAP requirements. The Maryland National Guard involvement in these programs has been acknowledged as having an impact on the way SPP programs are run around the country according to the National Guard

Bureau. SPP programs have been viewed as an appropriate mission in support of a national security strategy of flexible and selective peacetime engagement.<sup>27</sup> Maryland's SPP program has provided the necessary support to Estonia required to become a free-market and democratic. Based on the Estonia's invitation for membership to NATO, the question has been asked is the Maryland SPP still relevant? Should Maryland continue to provide military recourses to Estonia for training? Some Maryland National Guard officials feel that SPP involvement with Estonia will diminish over the next year. However, it is in the U.S. best interest to continue supporting SPP countries even after they have received an invitation to join NATO because SPP can continue to foster democratic and economic reforms Estonia needs to become a full fledged member of the west. Maryland should continue to work with the Estonia military and support needed training in the future. The Estonian Defense Forces are subordinated to democratic civil control. Estonia has established civil-military relations in accordance with the traditions of other democratic states. Maryland must continue to provide support at some level to Estonia to ensure that the Estonia Defense Forces continue reform for NATO missions ranging from peace keeping to combat operations. If Maryland's SPP is discontinued completely, this could effect the future state of readiness for the Estonian Defense Forces. Through the Maryland National Guard, the SPP promotes U.S national interests. Maryland, through the SPP, became the catalyst for Estonia to continue working in the areas of education and economics. It is imperative that the Maryland Guard continue the SPP is because of the training required by the Estonian military to help fight Global War on Terrorism (GWOT). To help train civilian law enforcement in areas that help combat the GWOT, more familiarization visits are need by both Maryland and Estonia.

## **CONCLUSION**

During his June 2001 European trip, President Bush indicated that the United States would not accept a zero – option scenario for new NATO members in 2002. The President's comments were based on the preparedness of countries meeting MAP requirements. The November 2002 NATO invitation to Estonia and six other Central and Eastern European countries to start accession negotiations is an example of the success of programs such as SPP. Considering the increase in military operations in the world and the decrease in personnel and financial resources available to the United State armed forces, it is essential for the military to operate in the most effective and efficient manner possible. Promoting regional stability through engagement with foreign military forces has proven to be an effective use of U.S. military forces.

The National Guard's SPP has clearly enhanced national security interests in Estonia. The National Guard's participation in Peacetime Engagement Programs in the Baltic States represents the type of force multiplier mission the National Guard is uniquely capable of performing. The Maryland National Guard has provided valuable support to Estonia in its quest to join NATO. Estonia's MAP is well on its way to meeting NATO standards. The Maryland Guard should continue to provide support to Estonia to enhance its SPP objectives that has proven success. The Maryland Guard has built upon the military - to - military contacts that are currently in place. Exchanges of small teams of individuals should take place on a longer-term basis than what is currently in place at this time. Maryland's SPP has created dialogues with civilian organizations in Estonia that has enhanced the overall program in the areas of education and business that has proven to be great opportunities for both. Estonian civilian government officials should increase visits to Maryland to continue their study of democracy and free market economies. It is important that Maryland state agencies continue to promote democracy and advocate civilian control of the military otherwise this could hurt the U.S. relationships that have developed over the past ten years in the Baltic region. Local governments both in Maryland and in Estonia should build on the partnerships developed with one another when they find it in the mutual interest to do so. Maryland's SPP has resulted in long-term relationships with key elements of Estonia's society. If the measurement of the SPP success is an invitation to start accession negotiations, the Maryland Guard program has succeeded. Maryland must continue to improve the efficiency of its partnership with Estonia by continuing to contribute their resources and personnel in support of common interests by pursuing the following:

- First, Maryland must continue the serious work of helping Estonia prepare and improve its military for operation with the NATO Alliance. Maryland must continue to show the same enthusiasm and unity of effort that they have demonstrated before Estonia's invitation to join NATO. Maryland should provide resources to support Estonia's plans for building new training facilities in order to develop more effective capabilities for operating in peace keeping scenarios, including out-of-area operations and in the context of allied interoperable structures. The exchange of individuals or small teams of individuals should be supported on a long-term basis instead of just two weeks. This would better support Estonia's military training missions that take place throughout the year.
- Second, Civilian and Military representatives from Estonia should continue to visit Maryland to observe firsthand the benefits that are achieved when democracy and market economies are taken precedence over the military. Maryland State Government

agency officials should make more familiarization visits to Estonia to demonstrate how the Maryland Guard works with civilian agencies like State and local police, and Maryland Emergency Management Agencies. Familiarization visits should expose the role of lobbyist working issues that affect the citizens of the state. One of the steps toward NATO membership is the progress on political issues. These visits fall under the Minuteman Fellows program. Funding for the Minuteman Fellows program should be increased to support monthly visits. By giving the Estonian civilian leadership the opportunity to review this process directly supports the goals of the SPP.

- Third, Cultural and education relations between Estonia and Maryland are an important part of the bilateral cooperation of the countries. The bilateral agreement between Maryland Colleges and Universities has played a large role in the education of exchange students that have visited the state. Estonian faculty members have also studied in Maryland. This program should be expanded to involved additional institutions in Maryland. By increasing the number of Colleges and Universities participating in the program, Estonian students and faculty will get a more diverse look at the of State of Maryland.
- Fourth, Maryland and Estonia Should continue the Bilateral Investment Incentive Agreement that was initiated in 1991. This agreement has been great for promoting economic activities in both Estonia and Maryland.

As Estonia moves forward to meet its MAP goals, the Maryland Guard's role is a key part of the process. Maryland's SPP is part of the framework that supports the interests of the United States and its allies. Maryland effort's in Estonia have contributed to military, political, economic, and social achievement towards democracy. Since cooperation and trust is based on good personal contacts and people-to-people communication, the civil component of the SPP is very important. Thus the expansion of the cooperation from military to civil areas has taken place. Hence, the Maryland National Guard's relationship with its State Partner, Estonia, has been considered to be one of the most progressive SPP programs and might serve as a model in its expansion from military to civil activities among other State Partnership Programs.

**WORD COUNT=**6,010

## ENDNOTES

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